

## **LA County Offers Free Vaccine for Hepatitis A**

Public Health taking steps to reduce the risk of illness spreading

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) warns consumers not to eat Townsend Farms Organic Antioxidant Blend of frozen berries sold through Costco stores as they may be linked to a multistate outbreak of hepatitis A infections. Los Angeles County has one confirmed case linked to the outbreak. A second case is still under investigation.

As of May 31, at least 30 cases are being investigated nationwide. In California, seven confirmed illnesses in persons who consumed this product have been reported from Humboldt, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino (2), Los Angeles and San Diego counties. Three of these individuals have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

“Those that have purchased this product should discard it if still found in their home,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer. “We are actively investigating this situation, anyone who has consumed this specific product should contact their doctor within the 14-day period to discuss possible hepatitis A prevention and treatment options.”

In LA County, nearly 3,000 packages of the Townsend Farms Organic Antioxidant Blend of frozen berries were sold to Costco members. Costco has now removed this product from stores and is notifying their member customers who have bought this product. LACDPH will continue to work with the California Department of Public Health, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration on this outbreak.

Health officials recommend that individuals who ate this product should receive an IG shot or hepatitis A vaccination to prevent or reduce illness. No other product is considered to be at risk. IG is a shot of concentrated antibodies made from donated blood, providing temporary protection; while the hepatitis A vaccine helps your body develop its own antibodies, providing longer-lasting protection. Shots must be received within 14 days of exposure in order to reduce or prevent illness.

Persons who have been vaccinated against hepatitis A or have received IG within the last three months or have ever had laboratory confirmed infection with the hepatitis A virus also do not need an injection of IG.

**Affected residents are encouraged to seek IG or vaccine through their personal physicians. The Department of Public Health will make IG and vaccine available through certain clinics. A list of these Public Health clinics, dates and locations can be found on the DPH website at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov) or by calling the LA County Info line at 211 from any landline or cell phone within the county.**

Public Health will operate special clinics this weekend on June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the sites listed below to offer preventive treatment to anyone who may have been exposed to this product.

AV Health Center

335 Ave K-6

Lancaster, CA

661-723-4526

North Hollywood HC

5300 Tujunga Ave

North Hollywood, CA

818-766-3982

Monrovia HC

330 W. Maple Ave

Monrovia, CA

626-256-1600

Hollywood Wilshire HC

5205 Melrose Ave

Los Angeles, CA 90038

323-769-7800

MLK Jr CPH

11833 S. Wilmington Ave

Los Angeles, CA 90059

323-568-8100

Whittier HC

7643 S. Painter Ave.

Whittier, CA 90602

562-464-5350

Curtis Tucker HC

123 W. Manchester Blvd

Inglewood, CA 90301

310-419-5325

## Signs and symptoms of hepatitis A

The incubation period for hepatitis A is two to seven weeks. If you may have been exposed, watch for the following symptoms:

- Jaundice (a yellow color to the eyes or skin)
- Nausea
- Loss of Appetite
- Vomiting
- Fatigue and light-colored bowel movements
- Fever
- Abdominal Cramps
- Dark-colored urine

If you experience these symptoms, contact your physician.

Close contacts, including household and sexual partners, are at risk for acquiring hepatitis A from an infected person. It is important to be diagnosed promptly to ensure that treatments with IG or vaccine are effective. Routine vaccination and thorough handwashing with soap and hot water after using the toilet and before handling food are the most effective factors in preventing the spread of the disease.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises nearly 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: @LAPublicHealth.